

BR. 14 NEWSLETTER



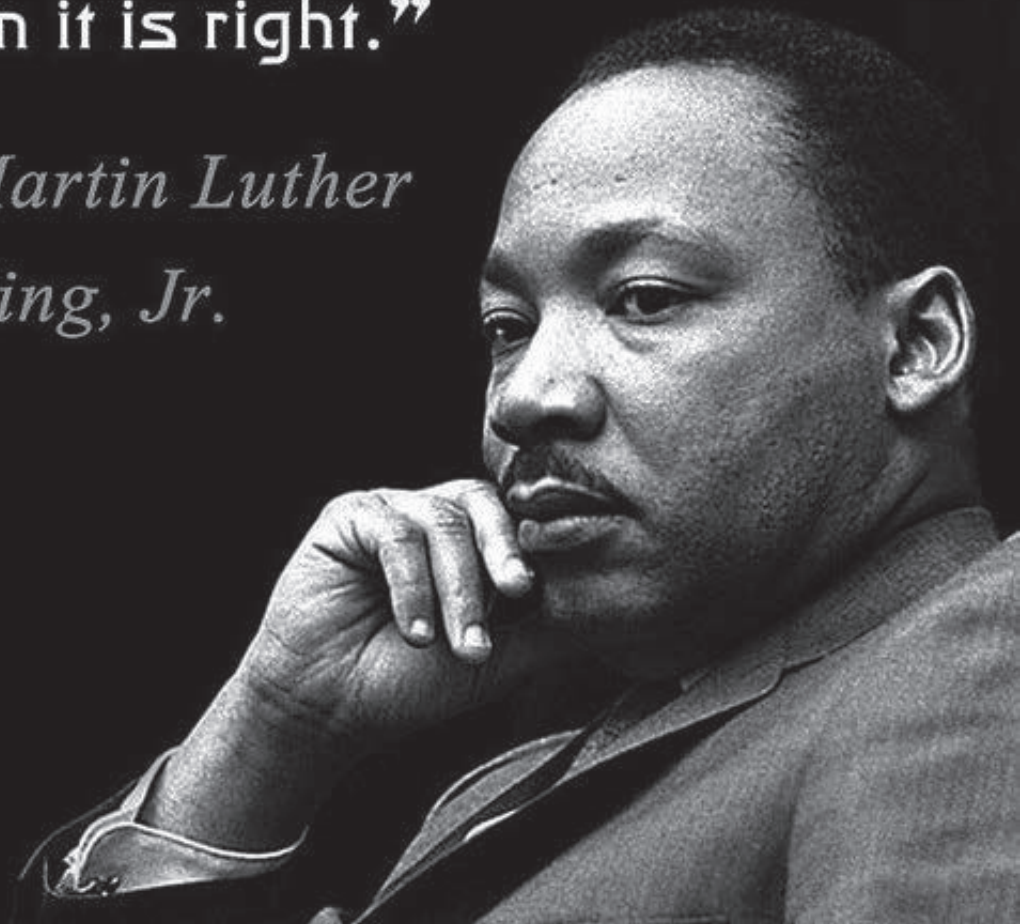
VOL 49, NO. 01

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF BRANCH 14, NALC
SERVING LOUISVILLE, FORT KNOX, BARDSTOWN, RADCLIFF, LAGRANGE,
LEBANON, EMINENCE, SHELBYVILLE, VINE GROVE, & SPRINGFIELD

JANUARY 2020

“There comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but he must take it because conscience tells him it is right.”

- *Dr. Martin Luther
King, Jr.*





TONY WEDDLE
President

The new year is well under way, but it appears 2020 isn't going to be much different than 2019. Discipline issued to carriers is still on the rise, as it was most of last year, and the Postal Service intends to conduct route inspections at several of our stations or installations we represent, just like they did in 2019. However, last year we agreed to a modified route inspection process which we have not extended for 2020. With the agreement we had last year, we were successful at protecting many of our members rights as we jointly participated with management in route inspections. However, that agreement had one significant fault.

With our assistance in the route inspection process, we were capable of inspecting routes at a much faster pace and at a cost which was greatly less than formal inspections. Primarily because fewer examiners were required. Fewer examiners meant less per diem to pay for travel related expenses such as meals, lodging and incidental expenses. The reduced costs to conduct route inspections simply made it too enticing for management to inspect more of our delivery units instead of going to other installations. So, unless management makes us an offer we can't refuse, which isn't likely, we're going to require management conduct formal route inspections on our assignments this year. They're going to have to exhaust some resources and they're going to have to follow every provision pertaining to route inspections or we're going to be there to grieve every violation. But that's if they follow through with the number of delivery units they intend to inspect.

As most of you are aware, there's going to be some changes to the district structure and personnel changes in the coming months. So, management is going to have a few challenges on their hands and it's probably going to be difficult for them to inspect the number of delivery units they would like to inspect for 2020. The hardest task for them will probably be assembling enough qualified examiners to perform the necessary street inspections. Because let's be honest, the Postal Service has promoted so many lazy and unqualified folks over the past several years that

they don't have the number of competent examiners they once had. Many supervisors only went into management because they didn't want to work. So, going out in poor weather conditions and walking all day is the last thing most of them want to do.

Which is why I think their tentative list of delivery units to inspect will change. Management currently intends to inspect seven delivery units under the Branch 14 umbrella but with all that's going on, that's probably a little overzealous. And if they try to rush or half-ass the inspections, which is not uncommon, they're going to make mistakes which will lead to grievances. The resolutions for those grievances could be to throw the results of the inspections out. Making the inspections a total waste of time and resources. Nevertheless, the delivery units management intends to inspect for this Spring are Annshire zones 05 and 18, Hikes Point (again), LaGrange, Shelbyville, Radcliff and Bardstown.

So, unless management makes us an offer we can't refuse, which isn't likely, we're going to require management conduct formal route inspections on our assignments this year. They're going to have to exhaust some resources and they're going to have to follow every provision pertaining to route inspections or we're going to be there to grieve every violation.

Obviously, we'll be conducting 1838C (office count) training at the union hall before each inspection and we hope that if you're going to be inspected that you attend the training. We intend to discuss and elaborate a little more on the street side of the inspection as well. I think that if we explain more of the things you're allowed to do and, probably should be doing, it will help with a carrier's route evaluation and may make some folks better carriers. But the simplest way to receive a favorable route evaluation is to perform your duties in the safest manner possible and to perform every task management asks of us.

Hope to see many of you at the next union meeting. Until then, be safe and remember, if you're going to do the job, you might as well take the time it takes to do the job right.

NEW MEMBERS

DON ADAMS
 ALEXANDER SMITH
 SAMUEL SCUDDER
 JOMMEL MERCED
 DANAI BRYANT
 JACOB LOGSDON
 BRIANNA MOORE
 ZACHARY PERRY
 JASMINE PITTMAN
 CHARLES RIGGS
 GRANSON BROWN
 CODY FARISH
 THOMAS FERGISON
 MICHAEL HARRIS
 NICHOLAS KAISER
 JEFFREY KERN
 JOHN MALDONADO
 AMY REIDLING
 SEAN SHARP
 DEVIN WATSON
 WILLIAM WONG-TORRERO

DECEASED

JACK L. WINBURN
 FLOYD A. RIVERS

LYNDON VETERANS



BRANCH 14 NEWSLETTER

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 Branch 14 National Association of Letter Carriers
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 Louisville, KY 40213

964-3200

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 Trustee.....Tina Davis
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 Trustee.....Jarett Sims

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 40203/08/10.....Whitney Brown
 40204.....Michelle Boyd
 40205.....Jarett Sims
 40206.....Matt Brown
 40207.....Carol Gast
 40209/14/15.....Ron Frye
 40211/12.....Matt Weegens
 40213.....Jarett Sims
 40216.....Elisha Potts
 40217.....Jeff Richards
 40218.....Matt Weegens
 40219.....Logan Hickey
 40220.....Vacant
 40222.....Bill Davis
 40228/91.....Tina Davis
 40229.....Miklos Melton
 40241/42.....Adriane Shanklin
 40243.....Vacant
 40258.....Josh Whaley
 40272.....Josh Whaley
 40299.....Jarett Sims
 Bardstown.....Vacant
 LaGrange.....Vacant
 Lebanon.....Vacant
 Shelbyville.....Dave Shuttleworth
 Springfield.....Vacant
 Fort Knox.....Renee McCoy
 Radcliff.....Reggie Sanders
 Vine Grove.....Jose Montoya

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RON GAST

Executive Vice-President

I normally try to write an article about something contractual. Something that pertains to most carriers. Sometimes that deals with overtime, or holidays, or even vacation. This time is no different, even though it may appear as it is because I'm looking at a different approach. All of you know that we have a contract with the Postal Service that is known as the National Agreement. Our most recent National Agreement was effective from May 21, 2016 through September 20, 2019. However, since a new agreement was not reached prior to the ending date, an agreement was made between the national parties to continue with the current agreement until a new one is reached. This is covered in Article 43.2 of the National Agreement. However, I want to talk about Article 43.1 which states:

Section 1. Separability

Should any part of this Agreement or any provision contained herein be rendered or declared invalid by reason of any exist-ing or subsequently enacted legislation or by a court of compe- tent jurisdiction, such invalidation of such part or provision of this Agreement shall not invalidate the remaining portions of this Agreement, and they shall remain in full force and effect.

I ask that you read the first part of that provision which states: **“Should any part of this Agreement or any provision contained herein be rendered or declared invalid by reason of any exist-ing or subsequently enacted legislation or by a court of compe- tent jurisdiction...”**

Our National leaders have worked for many years to ensure that all letter carriers receive a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. They have worked to ensure that we receive paid vacation, paid sick leave, paid holidays and appropriate pay increases, among many other things over the years. In a nutshell, the above language gives our legislators the right to discontinue all or part of our collective bargaining agreement (contract) with the stroke of a pen. This is where the different approach comes in. While we have an agreement with the Postal Service, which is binding through the grievance procedure, it could all go away if Congress decided to do so. If this happens, you would probably be looking at a

lower pay scale, less vacation time, less if not no sick leave and less to no paid holidays, among many other changes. The contract also ensures that management cannot fire a carrier without just cause. This would definitely go away without the contract. Just imagine, you get stuck in traffic due to an accident on your way to work, which causes you to be late. Upon arrival you find that your time card is no longer available. When you ask your supervisor, they tell you that you are fired for being late. There would be no recourse, no grievance, no nothing. You would simply be looking for another job.

This is why it is vitally important for all of us to get involved in the legislative process and work toward putting those in positions in Washington who will help our cause. We need to send those to Washington who support our issues and support our rights to bargain collectively. It doesn't matter which party you support, as long as you support those who support us. Now comes the dirty word that no one wants to hear (actually it's an acronym) and that is LCPF. LCPF stands for Letter Carrier Political Fund. This is a fund run by the NALC to help those in power who help us. The money for LCPF comes from donations by letter carriers such as you and I. As we all know, this is a big election year and our future does not look too bright. Those currently in power have made it clear that they want to privatize the Postal Service and do away with collective bargaining. This isn't a belief, they have said it. Therefore, now is the time for all letter carriers to stand up for ourselves and to support those who support us. If you are not currently contributing to LCPF, I strongly urge you to reconsider. I have heard many arguments from we shouldn't have to pay politicians to support us to the money only goes to one party. I agree that we shouldn't have to pay, but if that's the system that will allow us to keep our rights, I guess I have to be okay with it. As far as the dissemination of funds, LCPF gives money to members of all parties, as long as they show support for us. This isn't an opinion, it's a fact.

Therefore I am asking that every carrier give \$5 per payday to LCPF. You can give by payroll deduction so the money is taken out before you ever see it. \$5 out of your paycheck every two weeks should not even have an effect on you, but it will have a great effect on our future. As it has been called in the past, this is “job insurance”. We all have car insurance, health insurance and home insurance. Now it's time to put a few dollars toward your future with the Postal

Service. If you need any help making your donation, please call the union hall and we will get you taken care of.

If you're still reading this, I want to thank you for all you do. None of us can do this job by ourselves, it takes a team effort. Working together we can make amazing things happen. Let's all work together to ensure our future. Hope to see you at the next meeting on January 28th at 7:30 pm.



Any picture that you would like to see in the Branch 14 Newsletter should be emailed to the editor (billrock2k@yahoo.com) You can also text photos (with a short explanation) to the editor at 502-345-3732 Thank you, Bill Davis.





RON OSBORNE
Vice-President

Well it is the start of a new year and with the new year we face even bigger challenges as the last. We are only a few days into the year now and management is showing no signs of letting up on the issuance of discipline. Once again, the main charge they are using is failure to be regular in attendance. I have written about attendance in previous articles and find myself writing about it again. As I have said before, discipline for attendance is one of the hardest issues for your Union to defend. 75% of the time I find myself settling these grievances for a reduced amount of time that the discipline stays in a carrier record. The other 25% are expunged simply because the number of occurrences did not rise to the level of discipline or that management didn't properly issue the discipline. The bottom line is that we must come to work unless we have the proper documentation that covers us for our absence.

With the recent increase in attendance discipline cases if feel it is necessary to advise all of you of the following:

1. Always keep a copy of your leave slip. Make sure management provides you a copy.
2. Always be prepared to provide documentation for absences of 3 days or more. Without documentation your absence cannot be defended.
3. Request FMLA paperwork from management if you or your dependents have a condition that warrants recurring absences.
4. Depending on the requirement of your office, always use the call-in number and keep a copy of the confirmation you receive. If your office requires you to contact them directly then keep a log of the date and time you called and any phone records you have of the call.
5. I recommend you keep all copies of all documents concerning your absences, for a minimum of 1 year.
6. Keep your Union steward informed of your situation so they may provide you with a proper defense if you are wrongfully charged.

7. Notify your steward of any attendance reviews that management does with you.
8. Be honest in answering any questions during a PDI and have your documentation with you if possible.
9. Always invoke your Weingarten rights and request a steward be present if management questions you regarding attendance.
10. If you are unsure if you are or are not covered for an absence, ask your steward.

We all have to do these things to protect ourselves from being improperly disciplined for attendance. Keep up with our own documentation and records. Your steward can only defend your rights if you have provided them with the evidence to do so.

Now, that we have covered that, I would once again like to say that if you are one of those who abuses your sick leave or calls in on the day after every holiday, they will eventually get you. Your brothers and sisters must take up the slack for you which causes them to become tired and frustrated to the point that they call in more and are receiving discipline for their absences. The decisions carriers make to not come to work just because they don't want to, affects us all and causes frustration between carriers which leads to other issues. So, if you are one of these carriers, I caution you because I am seeing a lot more removals from the Postal service now. It has reached that level, and in many cases, it is too late now for your Union to save you. For those of you that are hanging in there and toughing it out, working those extra hours to cover the absences, I commend you and feel your pain. If you are sick or hurt, use your sick leave. You have every right to. For those of you who are not, I wish you the best in your next job.

I hope to see as many of you as can attend the next Union meeting this month. Stay safe and watch out for each other and we will make it through the tough times.

Shared Services

(National Human Resources)

1-877-477-3273

<http://liteblue.usps.gov>

National Association of Letter Carriers – Region 6
National Business Agent
January 2020 Report



Brothers and Sisters,

We've survived another "peak season" despite the roadblocks and utter mismanagement by the Postal Service. I asked the Postal Service, "why so short-staffed?" You were already over your caps! Don't worry about the caps; it's too late! We needed the help to serve our customers during peak season. The Postal Service should give every carrier who carried during peak, a huge holiday bonus to show their appreciation for your dedication regardless of their poor judgement. Thank God the Postal Service has dedicated craft employees! Though I haven't seen any confirmed numbers regarding parcel volumes yet, reports from the branches indicate parcel volume was high again this year. Again, you probably will not hear this from Postal management, but, on behalf of the NALC, I want to thank you all for your professional dedication to serve our customers.

Let's try to think positive. After all, we are starting a new year, and a new decade you know... Will this be the year (decade) that the Postal Service realizes this union is an ally, not a foe? Will this be the year we work together to serve both our customers and the needs of our employees?

Let's try to remain optimistic. After all, we are on the verge of a new contract, a new Postmaster General, a new Postal Board of Governors, and a presidential election year. Rest assured, the NALC will be working every angle possible to secure friendly personnel into every position that will have influence over the Postal Service and our members. The key here is this – YOU are the NALC. Yes, we have elected officers, and we have hired expert lobbyists and staff, but a union is as strong as its members. Out of over 300,000 members, we have hundreds that have advanced our messages. We call these members union activists. Is this the year (decade) you will join those ranks?

The first step in getting involved is going to your branch meetings. Branch leadership is always looking for help with the multiple tasks that are needed. I'm sure there are a few you can assist with!

Don't have time to help? That's okay, there are still other ways to help make the NALC strong and be considered a union activist. Support your shop stewards and branch officers on the workroom floor. Ask to see a shop steward whenever you believe our contract has been violated and make that written statement when asked to support our position of a violation. When we stick together in the policing of our contract, it

You cannot be afraid to stand up for our rights! If you use the excuse not to support your branch officers in fear of retaliation by management, I'd say you are trying to take the easy way out. That doesn't work. If you are not aware of the labor law which protects you, it is part of our jobs as union activists to educate you. Not only would management be in an alleged violation of our contract, but they **would** be breaking the law if they tried to retaliate against an employee for being an active participant with their union. The National Labor Relations Act Sections 7 and 8 is the law that protects our rights (Go to <https://www.nlr.gov> to learn more). It states, in part, that an employer may not:

Discharge, constructively discharge, suspend, layoff, fail to recall from layoff, demote, discipline, or take any other adverse action against employees because of their protected, concerted activities.

Be strong and stand up to management when they violate our contract.

Another way to be a union activist is to financially support your political action committee (PAC) fund – The Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF), this is the easiest way to be active with the union. Ask your branch officers how to do this or simply give our office a call at (586) 997-9917. Keep in mind these monies are ONLY used for the advancement of our Postal agendas and the protection of union rights. No other political platforms are supported with these funds.

So, is this the year (decade) that you become involved? Make no mistake – we need you!

Happy New Year!

In Solidarity,

Troy Clark

National Business Agent – Region 6

Kentucky – Indiana – Michigan (KIM)

By making a contribution to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, you are doing so voluntarily with the understanding that your contribution is not a condition of membership in the National Association of Letter Carriers or of employment by the Postal Service, nor is it part of union dues. You have a right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal. The Letter Carrier Political Fund will use the money it receives to contribute to candidates for federal office and undertake other political spending as permitted by law. Your selection shall remain in full force and effect until cancelled. Contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. Federal law prohibits the Letter Carrier Political Fund from soliciting contributions from individuals who are not NALC members, executive and administrative staff or their families. Any contribution received from such an individual will be refunded to that contributor. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 in a calendar year.



TOM WEBB
Health Benefits/Retirement

HAPPY NEW YEAR. Welcome to 2020, I hope that the new year brings happiness and success to everyone. The news media reports seem to be full of nothing but bad news. There must be a better way to start a new year. We can make it happen if we only do the small things to make our world a better place.

Thinking about retirement in the near future? Now is the time to start planning for your future. There are many decisions that must be made prior to retirement. When planning for the future, you must consider the many options available to you. FERS employees need to know how much Social Security will they draw, how to handle their Thrift Saving Plan, whether to opt for Medicare Part B, and many other options. The family must be considered when making these decisions, who will be your beneficiaries, who will know how to contact OPM if you are unable to, whether to carry optional insurance into retirement. All these things and more take time to decide what you want to do with the rest of your life. Start making the plan now and the move to retirement will be smooth and easy.

For those CSRS employees who are veterans, read Dan Toth's article in the December issue of the Postal Record. If you have not made your Military Deposit for the years you served our country, you may want to make the deposit to increase your retirement income.

I want to welcome all the new members of the NALC Health Benefit Plan for 2020. You joined the best plan available to you as letter carriers. I am in the Union Office most Tuesdays after 1:30 PM to assist you in any way I can with the NALC Plan.



ADRIANE SHANKLIN
Sergeant at Arms/Scribe

Welcome to 2020 Branch 14! Did you make a new year resolution? Well we've officially made it through the holiday season. Everyone needs a pat on the back. We had minimal accidents, dark mornings and nights, overload of packages, and bam holidays are over! Well at least we thought they were. I know you've noticed the decrease in the number of packages, but not by much. Its looking like December is pouring over into January. I don't know about your station, but only a few people got back on the ODL list, and then you factor in the call-ins. Everyone is exhausted, and help can't come soon enough. The post office is currently hiring CCA's, PSCs, and RCAs so hopefully we'll get some relief soon (hint hint: time to adjust these start times)! Until then, make sure you're still out on the street being safe, and in uniform. New year, but same rules! So, expect the usual safety blitz. No headphones in unless you're stationary (I've learned the hard way). That also means when your supervisor is calling you, and yes they do call, make sure you're pulled over and away from your customers. Customers first instinct is to call in on you and say you're on the phone not paying attention. The supervisor will never recall that they called you!

On another note, the bowl-a-thon is Sunday January 26, 1pm @ Ken Bowl. Get your team together and come out and have some fun. This is also a good family outing as well, so bring the kids. This is followed up by the first union meeting of the year, Tuesday January 28th @ 7:30pm.

As always remember knowledge is power!

Make the Call!

1-800-EAP-4-YOU

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www.EAP4YOU.com

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*Next Union Meeting
January 28th at 7:30pm*

*Steward Meeting 6:30 pm
United we bargain, Divided we beg*



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Mailing Address: 1420 Gardiner Ln Room 66	600 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.	
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	F: 502-458-2682	P/F: 502-584-3579
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BEAT YOUR RATE IS BACK!

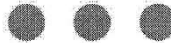
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Our Annual Meeting is
April 20th, 2020

Please R.S.V.P. by April 1st

*Restrictions Apply. Must refinance from another financial institution. Speak to a representative for more information.



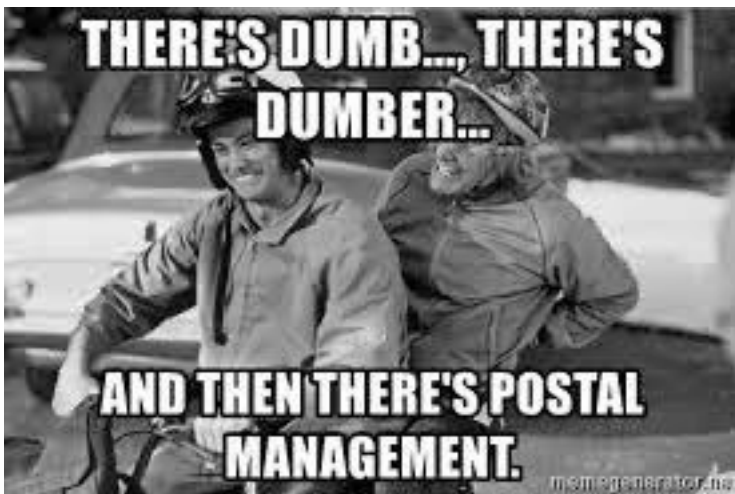
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